

CHAPTER 6. ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION OF CORRESPONDENCE

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1. What is the electronic transmission of correspondence?
2. What are the types of electronic transmission?

1. What is the electronic transmission of correspondence?

- a. **Transmitting correspondence electronically.** This chapter addresses the various options and means of transmitting memorandums, letters, and other types of correspondence electronically. It is the policy of the DOT and the FHWA that all official correspondence be sent by the most efficient and cost-effective means available.
- b. **Formatting and records retention policies.** The policies governing the formatting of official correspondence will differ slightly when the information is electronically transmitted. However, the official version is the signed and dated original of the correspondence, with appropriate concurrences if required, which must be retained for the length of time specified in the Records Disposition Schedules (see <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/legregs/directives/orders/m13241.htm>).
- c. **Recipients of electronic correspondence.** Whatever electronic transmission you decide to use, do not send a backup hardcopy, fax, or telephone message. Recipients of electronic correspondence should not delay action in anticipation of a back-up copy, paper or otherwise.
- d. **Signature levels.** The signature levels (see Figure 2.3 in Chapter 2) for both the paper and electronic versions of official FHWA correspondence are the same. All electronic correspondence from the Washington Headquarters requiring action by the FHWA field offices must first be signed by the appropriate official before it is transmitted to the field offices. When sending correspondence (letters and memorandums) via e-mail, make sure to indicate “Original Signed By” or use an electronic signature. “Original Signed By” should appear above the person’s name in memorandums and in the middle of the signature block on letters. Electronic signatures can only be used with the appropriate approval of the signer.

2. What are the types of electronic transmission?

- a. **Electronic mail (E-mail).** Sending mail electronically is the quickest method of transmitting formal and informal correspondence. Electronic files such as documents and spreadsheets can be attached to e-mail messages. Also, distributing correspondence by e-mail enables the recipient to easily forward action and information copies electronically to the appropriate personnel without

having to make paper copies. To facilitate reading e-mail messages on the computer screen, use a font size and margins that will enable the recipient to see each line completely on their screen without having the lines extend beyond the screen width or wrap automatically to the next line.

- (1) **Guidelines for sending electronic mail.** The guidelines for sending electronic mail are posted on StaffNet at:
<http://staffnet.fhwa.dot.gov/computer/emailgde.htm>.
 - (2) **Field offices distributions.** To avoid duplicative receipt of transmissions at a location, an official mailbox has been established for Associate Administrators, Directors of Field Services, Resource Center Managers, Division Administrators, and Federal Lands Highway Division Engineers. The National Mail Groups are:
 - (a) ##ADM_LDR - Administrator, Deputy Administrator, Executive Director, Associate Administrators, Directors of Field Services, DA Council Representative
 - (b) ##ADM_UNIT - Administrator, Deputy Administrator, Executive Director, Associate Administrators
 - (c) ##ALLDFS - Directors of Field Services
 - (d) ##ALLFLH - Eastern, Central and Western Federal Lands Highway Division Engineers and Associate Administrator for Federal Lands Highway
 - (e) ##ALLHDA - Division Administrators
 - (f) ##ALLRCM - Resource Center Managers
 - (g) ##ALLFIELD - ##ALLHDA, ##ALLDFS, ##ALLRCM, ##ALLFLH, AAST (Atlanta Administrative Service Team), LAST (Lakewood Administrative Service Team)
 - (h) HQTRS - All Washington Headquarters' government employees
 - (i) HQCONTRACTORS - All Washington Headquarters' contracted employees
 - (j) FHWAFIELD - All field government employees
 - (k) FHWACONTRACTORS – All field contracted employees
- b. **Facsimile.** Facsimile is the transmission of an exact copy of a document, graphic material, charts, and correspondence through use of special equipment in

connection with telephone lines. The locations and telephone numbers of FHWA controlled transmission terminals are listed in the FHWA Key Field Personnel Directory that is posted on the FHWA Internet and StaffNet sites.